



Aruban Police Department celebrates their twenty-first anniversary

On August 16, 1986, the independent police department of Aruba was founded, and on Thursday morning of this week, executive officers and island dignitaries celebrated the event with a Mass at the San Francisco Church in Oranjestad. Occupying the front row pews for Mass was the Minister of Justice, Rudy Croes, flanked by present Chief Commission of Police, Peter De Witte and Deputy Commissioner of Police Krozendijk.

Additionally attending the Mass was former Governor of Aruba Olindo Koolman and his wife Dora, along with the President and Vic-President of Parliament, Mervyn Wyatt-Ras and Zulay van Poppel Lt. Governor of Aruba Christina van den Berg de Frietas, and a number of retired senior officers. Father Jairo Maduro of Aruba, who is presently in service in Venezuela, conducted the anniversary Mass, traveling to Aruba for this specific purpose, which he does every year.

During the mass officer Jacky Morel lead the gathering in prayer, and following the religious service, the latest graduating class of the Aruban Police Academy conducted a short march through the streets of Oranjestad to Police Headquarters on the Wilheminastraat. The police marching band accompanied them, with Father Maduro joining them in police uniform as trumpeter. John Laromie, Public Relations Officer, welcomed the gathering at the headquarters' façade and there Chief Commissioner of Police De Witte addressed the academy graduates and those attending before distributing diplomas to fourteen new officers.

Chief Commissioner de Witte congratulated the class on completing their four years of study to become police officers, and admonished them to remember the responsibilities of their position and to discharge their duties with integrity. In particular, he reminded them that they are police officers at all times "where in uniform or not, the community looks to you for exemplary behavior and an example to our youth. Your actions decide whether you are considered a friend or a foe, and the public should always consider the police the place where they do not hesitate to turn when there is trouble."

The eleven men and three women that earned their diplomas named individually and proudly came to the podium to accept them from Chief de Witte. Afterwards,, an informal celebration for the graduates and their families was conducted in the police courtyard. Chief de Witte expressed great satisfaction that a new class of officers has joined the force, which he and the Ministry of Justice would like to see increased. Earlier this year, the police report for 2006 was issued, and though the police showed an exemplary record by solving 100% of the capital crimes committed in 2006, they reported a sharp increase in serious traffic accidents, and a shortage of officers.

The staff of THE NEWS congratulates the Aruban Police on their twenty-first anniversary as an independent police force, and to the new officers on completing their studies and initiation into the force.